(c) the reasons for delay in approving the projects; and

(d) the time by when the project is likely to be approved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir. A proposal seeking an amount of Rs.13.36 crores from Prime Minister National Relief Fund (PMNRF) for Watershed Management Project covering 34 villages was received from Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority.

(b) to (d) In consultation with Government of Gujarat, a Watershed Management/Drought Proofing Project was finalized for 300 village in Kutch and grant of Rs.70.00 crore has been sanctioned from the PMNRF. An amount of Rs.5.20 crore has been released as initial advance on 16.2.2002 for the project.

Deadlines for States to collect pending funds

5212. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the effect of the deadline of February 28, set by the Rural Developrment Minister for States to collect their pending funds and spend them within 20 days or forget about getting the next instalment in April; and

(b) how many States adhered to this "deadline" and their names and which are the States who did not adhere to this "deadline" and what action Government proposes to take in this vital rural development sector?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) and (b) With a view to enable the States/ UTs reduce 'cuts' in releses (due to late submission of proposals), utilise more money during the year of release and thereby reducing the unspent balances, the Ministry of Rural Development advised all the State/UTs to get the funds allocated to them released, under the allocation- based programmes of the Ministry, by 28th February, 2002. The Senior Officers of the Ministry visited various States to help them formulate the proposals in time. As a result, several

States have claimed funds for most of the Schemes by February 28. The efforts of the Ministry have led to release of 86.1 % of the allocated funds to the States/UTs upto 28th February, 2002, compared to 73.6% released till 28th February during the previous year, under the relevant allocation-based programmes. Notwithstanding the advice of the Ministry to get funds released by 28th February, 2002, the proposals received after that date were also processed for releasing funds, subject to mandatory cuts.

Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan National Mission plan for development of wastelands

5213. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a new three-tier plan entitled "Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan National Mission" has been formulated to develop vast geographical areas of wastelands or degraded lands in various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the time frame drawn up for various projects identified, financial allocation made and role assigned to the Non-Government organizations and others; and

(c) the specifics of State-wise sub-plans drawn up for increasing the productivity of land, especially in the desert State of Rajasthan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) to (c) At present, the Programmes relating to conservation, development and management of land resources are being handled in different Ministries/ Departments with separate Guidelines and varying funding patterns. The need has been felt to put in place an integrated mechanism capable of responding effectively to the challenges of managing the country's land resources. While the matter is under consideration, the State Governments have also been advised to prepare Perspective Plans for the development of wastelands/degraded lands in a time bound manner.